

TRIUMPH

“Do you know that in a race all the runners compete, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it” (1 Cor. 9:24)

“Who is a wise man?”

Gabriel Rodriguez

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The demonstration of wisdom (i.e., skillful living) does not come merely with age or secular position (cf., Job 32:6-7), rather, according to James, it is shown “out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom” (3:13).

The word “good” is the Greek word *kalos* and is defined as excellent in its nature and character, and therefore well adapted to its end; morally good. The word “conversation” is the Greek word *anastrophe* and is defined as one’s manner of life, conduct, behavior, and/or behavior. The word “works” is the Greek word *ergon* and is defined as an act or deed. So the thought is clear. Wisdom is evinced through excellent behavior expressed through action(s). But we must complement wisdom with “meekness.” The Greek word is *prautes* and is defined as gentleness and humility, opposite of arrogance and pride. The wise person doesn’t parade himself as a know-it-all or God’s gift to the world, rather his humble demeanor exemplifies the outstanding character of righteousness and godliness.

Conversely, James mentions the opposite: “But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descends not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work” (3:14-16). The opposite of living skillfully is living foolishly and this is demonstrated by wicked behavior, expressed through fighting and creating factions against our brethren and/or people of the world. In other words, we are not team players, but only desire to promote ourselves and our interests. James identified that this behavior as mimicking the behavior that Satan demonstrated, one of selfishness and pride (1 Tim. 3:7), which led to his demise.

Behavior that is unbecoming leads to division, confusion, and every evil work. Ill behavior destroys, while a true wise person’s behavior promotes and builds up others. Let us strive to be people filled with true wisdom and demonstrate this with excellent behavior. This is the way we’ll lead people to God! May God be praised!

Church News and Announcements

CONGREGATION

We are happy to announce that Ray and Norma Trevino, and their daughter Emily, have placed membership with us. Their information is: 8715 Data Point Dr. #2408, SAT, 78229; (210) 273-5728 (Ray); (361) 728-7628 (Norma). Let's welcome this wonderful family.

The New Year's Eve fellowship and devotional will be after services on December 31st in the annex. Please bring finger foods and games.

The new service opportunities sheets for the year 2015 are in the foyer. Members, please take time to volunteer your time, talents, and home for the various works of the church. We need your help to continue to make Shenandoah an active body of believers. Thanks.

All are invited to the renewing of vows ceremony of Ronald and Vianey Garcia on January 3rd at 1:00 pm here at Shenandoah. A reception will follow. RSVP with Blanca Garcia at (210) 838-6380 (call or text).

YOUTH

No news at this time.

YOUNG ADULT

No news at this time.

THE NEW INNOVATIONS OF THE CHURCH (5c)

What about the practice of choirs or singing groups, if done without the use of instruments? There are many congregations of the Lord that will host a choir or singing group during an evening service and call it a worship service. Is this Biblical?

While "some" choirs and singing groups don't violate the commandment of not using instrumental music (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), here is something to consider. The word "worship" in the Greek language is *proskuneo* and literally means a dog licking his master's hand. It later referred to someone kneeling or prostrating to do homage or make obeisance, whether in order to express respect or to make supplication. We are commanded in the Scriptures to "worship God" (Jn. 4:23-24; Rev. 19:10; 22:9). This means that everything we do in worship should **NEVER** be about us, rather it should be directed to the Father. If we were to be objective about choirs and singing groups, while the participants will tell us that their using their talents to praise and worship God, it belies a reality - both groups are applauded for their musicality and performance, and it's not about worship directed unto God.

As was noted, worship is about reverencing and honoring God, which means that what we do (in worship, Acts 2:42) must conform to the rhyme and reason of God, and it's not about whether we possess great sounding voices, rather it's about the building of the mind (intellect). Since

God is mind (Jn. 4:24, Jn. 1:1) then the structure of worship is built around the lifting up of the mind through thought and communication. Since this is the case, then when studied carefully, every aspect of worship (as God directed) is for the purpose of mind and thought, not for a showcase of performance. This is what many folks don't get and understand. When they play their instruments, or sing in a choir or singing group, the emphasis is no longer on what honors God, rather what honors us.

The whole purpose of worship was to honor God by making ourselves spiritually better, and this is done through mind/communication (i.e., the Bible). As was stated in previous articles, singing doesn't do this on a grand scale. While Biblical singing confirms Scriptures, it doesn't force us to really think deeply about the Scriptures like teaching and preaching do (2 Tim. 2:15; 4:2). This is why when more focus is put on the way we sound and not the building of the mind, then we start to neglect what actually helps us in our walk with God - studying, meditation, and application. Tools needed to maintain and conform our walk with God. May we seek to please God by emphasizing what He deems important. May God be praised!

Bro. G. Rodriguez

WHAT SAITH THE LORD?

Nearly two thousand years ago an important question was raised before the Apostles after they had delivered the good news of Jesus's life, death, burial, and resurrection (Acts 2:21-36). The hearer's conscience were pricked of sinful conduct (2 Cor. 7: 10-11) and asked: "*Men and brethren, what shall we do* (in order to be saved)? (Acts 2:37). Without hesitation, Peter elevated his voice and proclaimed: "*Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts 2:38).

Upon hearing the words of Peter, the people obeyed. This demonstrated their belief in Christ (Jn. 8:24). Hence, they repented of sin and confessed allegiance to the name of Christ (Matt. 10:32-33). Afterwards, the people were baptized for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:41, cf. Mrk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21).

The people's submission to the words of salvation granted them a relationship with God the Father by accessing citizenship into the church of Christ (Acts 2:47, cf. Matt. 16:18; Mrk. 9:1; Acts. 2:1-4). As a member of Christ's body (Acts 8:4) the people were then encouraged to live faithful unto death by conquering sin in their lives (Rev. 2:10; Rom. 6: 4-12; 2 Tim. 4: 6-8). We then await for the coming day in which all men shall be judged the word of God (Jn 12:48; Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10). Will we be ready?

SHEPHERD'S CORNER

Sin Is Powerful

Why did God require obedience? Was it to keep us from enjoying the good things of life?

Moses answers, "For our good always" (Deut. 6:24). We need to see what sin does to us. Sin is the great separator, which is why Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden: "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God" (Isa. 59:2). As wise King Solomon wrote, "By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil" (Prov. 16:6). Because Israel rebelled against God, a whole generation perished in the wilderness (Num. 14:22-32). Their unbelief and disobedience is a warning to us today "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God ...To whom sware he that they should not enter into his rest, but to them that were disobedient? And we see they were not able to enter in because of unbelief. Let us fear therefore" (Heb. 3:12-19; 4:1).

Sin kills. There is no pretty way to say it. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die...The wages of sin is death...Sin fullgrown bringeth forth death" (Ezek. 18:20); Rom. 6:23; Jas. 1:14). Only when we recognize the power which sin has will we be willing to turn back from it (Lk. 13:3) It is too easy to deceive ourselves with the idea of "everyone is doing it" and "everyone makes mistakes" and so belittle in our own mind what the real effect of in is. It is true that "All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). But it is also true that "the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 Jno. 5:19). There will be no comfort in being lost eternally with numerous other who are as bad as we are! It was because of sin, yours and mine, that Jesus went to the cross "That he by the grace of God should taste of death for every man" (Heb. 2:9). If sin was (and is) terrible enough to cost the life of God's only begotten Son, it's power in our lives today should not be minimized.

We encourage you to examine your own life. If changes need to be made, please act today. There is no promise for tomorrow.

Bro. Wayne Holmes

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

BISHOPS/SHEPHERDS/ELDERS

(1 Tim. 3: 1-6)

Brother Elwyn Hipp (830) 510-6311,
Brother Wayne Holmes (210) 696-8597

DEACON

(Acts 6: 1-5; 1
Tim. 3: 7-12)

Brother Raul Baltierra
(210) 843-9730

GOSPEL PREACHER

(1 Cor. 9:1-16; 1 Tim.
4:6; 2 Tim. 4: 2-5)

Brother Gabriel Rodriguez
(210)315-4453



December 21

AM WORSHIP

Announcements: *S. Hernandez*
 Opening Prayer: *T. Mayces*
 Song Leader: *E. Hipp*
 Lord's Supper: *A. Maldonado; J. Oakes; J. Cardenas; Z. Watkins*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *J. Mora*

PM WORSHIP

Announcements: *S. Hernandez*
 Opening Prayer: *R. Baltierra Jr.*
 Song Leader: *A. Maldonado*
 Lord's Supper: *M. dela Garza; E. Lerma*
 Sermon: *G. Rodriguez*
 Benediction: *M. Neaves*

After Greeter: *E & K Hipp*
 Greeter/Usher: *B. Dorries*
 AV Duty: *J. Oakes*
 Elder in charge: *E. Hipp*
 Parking Lot Attendant: *AM, R. Baltierra; PM, E. Hipp*

REMEMBERING OUR BELOVED

(by writing, calling, and praying)

Wayne Holmes
 Juanita Mahan
 Richard Rodriguez
 Rina White
 Argelia (Janie's mother)
 Joe Guillen
 Sarah Cannon
 Roberto Garcia
 Lorenza Bejarano
 Olga (Joe's mother-in-law)
 Anthony Harris Sr
 Ina Dial
 Isabel (Lynn's mother)
 David Sudhoff
 Elijah Sudhoff
 Ashton Balyeat
 Roy Guajardo (battling Parkinsons)

BATTLING CANCER:

Barbara Oakes	Johna Dorries
Edna Wilks	Abigail Reyes
Lydia Cowan	George Jackson
Briana Nieves	Margie Hargrove
Sonny Cary	Mary Purkey
Elwyn Hipp	Graciola Anderson

SHUT-INS:

Dorothy Harper
 Mary Louese Hughes
 Dazel Ball
 Mildred Geest

TRAVELING:

A. Jacob

DEPLOYED:

James Braun (Nephew of Michael) (Navy).

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES JANUARY

Organizing Monthly Luncheon:
Rodriguez
 Preparing Lord's Supper:
Dorries
 Auditorium Service Duties:
C. Cobb
 Wash baptismal garments; clean cry
 room
C. Cobb
 Brother in charge of services:
B. Dorries

AM Theme:
 Remembering Why We Started
 PM Theme:
 Setting The church In Order

AM Sermon:
Maintenance (3)

PM Sermon:
How Do We Effect Change? (3)

WEDNESDAY NIGHT DEVOTIONAL

December 24: E. Hipp
 December 31: J. Guillen
 January 7: R. Baltierra Jr.

FOR THE RECORD

DECEMBER 14

Attendance:

Sunday Bible Study	53
Sunday AM Worship	79
Sunday PM Worship	43
Wednesday Bible Study	46
Budget/Offering:	\$2,450.00/ \$2468.02

Weekly Bible Readers 5 (Adult Bible class)

SHENANDOAH CHURCH OF CHRIST

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 San Antonio, TX 78230
 (210) 696-5532
 Fax: (210) 696-5181

Church email Address:
shenandoah@shenandoahcofc.org

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES:

Sunday: Bible Study at 9:30 am; Worship at 10:30 am;
 Worship at 5:00 pm.
 Wednesday: Bible Study at 7:00 pm